

- The MONTH with the EDITOR -

Notes, reflections, comment upon medical and health news in both the scientific and public press, briefs of sorts from here, there and everywhere.

There is a vast difference between the physician giving charity to the needy one who applies to him for such services and the giving of his time and energy to the public in a matter that it is the plain duty of the public to provide for. The physician should give more heed and study to things of this kind and learn to discriminate between those matters which are truly altruistic and those which are not.—M. L. Harris, Chairman of the Judicial Council, A. M. A.

Little does the public know of the vast amount of uncompensated work in the alleviation of pain, sickness, and disease that is "carried on" by the medical profession. Perhaps there is no single fact which more sharply differentiates modern times from antiquity than the patient, quiet, unheralded, unrequited and generous service which doctors give to the poor patients in our great hospitals and elsewhere.—Lloyd Paul Stryker, Esq., Counsel Medical Society of New York, New York State J. Med.

The unwillingness of some physicians to render a certain service for less than a certain fixed fee is causing thousands of erstwhile prideful but poor citizens to join the vast drab army of charity seekers. This in our judgment is one of the causes for the growing demand for state medicine that none can fail to hear and none can silence save by placing the best of medical service within the reach of every citizen. Fortunately in most cases this is being done.—Editorial, Colorado Medicine.

The Rockefeller Foundation is rendering another excellent service in the publishing of "Methods and Problems of Medical Education," booklets.

The recent volume of the fourth series is an excellent expensively illustrated description of the "unit system" of clinical records as used at Presbyterian Hospital, New York. Some hospitals still cling to the obsolete methods of collecting and binding patients' records in volumes. This publication may help them.

The Foundation would render an equally fine service by issuing a publication showing the method of linking up a similar unit system of doctors' offices with that of hospitals.

There is a growing conviction that it is not always easy to distinguish between the harmful and the harmless with respect to the protozoa. Attendant circumstances, such as gastro-intestinal lesions, may sometimes render otherwise innocuous living forms objectionable in the alimentary canal for mechanical or other reasons. Furthermore, the number of expert diagnosticians in clinical protozoology is at present still somewhat limited.—J. A. M. A.

The vast majority of the medical profession will be found to be sympathetic with sane and efficient public health work, and there is something lacking in the character of a health administrator who is unable to obtain such sympathy.—Matthias Nicoll, Jr., New York State Health Commissioner, The Nation's Health.

American pediatric literature continues to contain many articles on breast feeding. Most of them, however, resemble closely articles which were written one hundred or more years ago, and contain little that is new. It is

doubtful whether the present method of expressing breast milk is any different from that in use generations ago, although it is better described. It is certain, however, that our forefathers did not use electrical breast pumps, which are proving most useful and are available to all at a moderate rental.—John Lovett Morse, Boston M. and S. J.

The editorial desk receives and discharges no inconsiderable amount of printed and mimeographed material classifiable as "available filler." Were one to use it all "as is" most of the content for the month would be on hand. Were one to write an introduction and express an opinion on each item the remaining portion of the white space available would be filled and thus all promoters could be accommodated.—Long Island M. J.

Ng Ka Py Now Medicine—Up to the time of going to press Chinese wine, known as ng ka py, was officially classed as a medicine and not a beverage, and could be imported and transported without violation of the Eighteenth Amendment or the Volstead Law.

In the last six years there have been no less than seven rulings, each changing the previous legal status of this liquid. Apparently no consideration was given to the question of its actual medicinal properties.—From an editorial, San Francisco Bulletin.

Now we know the psychology behind the naming of Pullman cars.

Osler—Three types of minds collaborate in medical progress: the investigating; the evaluating, collecting, blending, teaching; and the utilitarian—quantities rarely combined in one person. Osler combined these as did no other physician in history, and in this fact is the secret of his genius and greatness. The investigating side of this wonderful mind led Osler to blaze new trails into the unknown, which are now highways, but others have blazed even longer and clearer trails. His capacity for evaluating, collecting, teaching medical science is best shown in the periodic appearance of his *Principles and Practice of Medicine*, the *vade mecum* for doctors around the world, but others also have been great teachers. His ability to utilize medical knowledge and apply it wisely at the bedside made him a master healer, but others have been great healers. But history does not tell us of another who combined all these qualities within himself and who utilized them so well, and thus we see the secret of the most remarkable medical genius and the greatest physician of all time. He stands alone, peerless.

"We need controlled, conditioned air, just as we have controlled conditioned milk or controlled conditioned water." In these words J. E. Rush (Jour. of American Society of Heating and Ventilating Engineers, August, 1926), closes a discussion of ventilation that every doctor should read.

In "Post Mortems" and "Mere Mortals" (Doran) C. MacLaurin, doctor of medicine and teacher of surgery, University of Sidney, who died recently, undertakes an interesting scientific study of many characters of history, with particular reference to the possible influence their

certain or probable infirmities has had in directing the currents of human destiny.

Henry VIII, Anne Boleyn, Jeanne d'Arc, Edward Gibbon, Napoleon, Doctor Johnson, Nietzsche, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Martin Luther, and many others are reinterpreted in the light of the trained medical historian. The picture is useful, but it is not a pretty one.

Physicians may profit from the stories, but the books should not be read by persons with unformed minds, and they certainly are not suitable companions for the young.

A town started to install street lights, but when the fixtures were erected and before the globes had been put in, a flock of birds built nests in the empty sockets. The state law forbids the disturbance of a bird's nest.

And now the town is waiting for the birds to tear down their nests so it can legally light its streets.—Nation's Business.

There is now no reason for medicine hiding behind anything; there is every reason for her coming out into the noonday sun and keeping herself on exhibit. Advertise to the world more and more what medical science has done and is doing for the comfort and happiness of every man, woman, and child; and less and less how some doctor "performed a delicate operation," or has some prominent person under his care.—Editorial, South. M. and S., July, 1926.

And you fellows are so amazingly silent. Not long ago I heard a public speaker say: "Evolution! Heredity! I am sick of the words! There is just one heredity in this world of ours—we are the children of God!" I tell you it brought down the house. I glanced at Doc Jones; he didn't applaud; he was looking at a little boy near him who had the snuffles, and whose nose was beginning to saddle.

And I said, "Well, for land sake!"—Ohio Health News.

I just wonder when people in their ignorance will stop speaking about a case instead of a patient, and when physicians will stop talking about operating a case. Doctors who have attended ward schools should know better.—S. E. E., Indianapolis Medical Journal.

The Rockefeller Foundation Review for 1925 by George E. Vincent, president of the Foundation, a pamphlet of sixty pages, contains much information interesting to doctors.

The work of the foundation is so extensive and varied as to stagger the imagination of the average reader of its doings.

"The well-being of mankind throughout the world" from the Seal of the Foundation, typifies policies that are being carried forward by amazingly extensive plans and the expenditure of untold wealth. Many extracts of President Vincent's review have been published in the public press, but the report itself is so condensed that quotation or comment misses much of a picture already in miniature.

Physicians who need information for their patients about the Koch cancer treatment will find what they want in the Journal A. M. A. of June 21, 1926. Reprints of this editorial and article are available (A. M. A.) and a few of them wisely distributed will do much good.

A census prepared by the National Public Health Nursing Association gives a total of 11,171 public health nurses in the U. S. A. *There should be 100,000.*

Public health nurses are promoted and directed by 3269 agencies. *One hundred would be too many.* Fifty-one per cent of these directing agencies are governmental. *State medicine is prospering.* Fifty-nine per cent of the

3000 + counties have no public health nurses. *Nine per cent would be too many.*

Seventy-four per cent of these nurses are working in cities of over 10,000. *This is about the reverse of what should be.*

What are we going to do about it? Quien sabe!

Walter Addison Jayne's "The Healing Gods of Ancient Civilization" (Yale University Press) is all that its title suggests. The contents of this useful book of 500 + pages are well described by the publishers, who claim it to be "a definite summary of the period before the art of healing had come out of its primitive devotional and mythologic phase, its era of soothsaying and magic."

Any doctor who aspires to more than a modicum of medical culture will find pleasure and information in a leisurely perusal of this book.

In speaking before the Montana Medical Association recently, W. J. Mayo announced that, in the future, no physician or surgeon would be accepted on the staff of the Mayo Brothers' Hospital at Rochester who is not a member of the Medical Officers' Reserve Corps if he is physically fit.

The speaker also said that he is urging all members of the Mayo Brothers' staff to send their sons either to schools having reserve officers' training corps or to the citizens' military training camps. He declared that these youths are the backbone of the nation's future defense, and the cadets of today will be the officers of tomorrow.

In transmitting the newspaper clippings of this address, officers of the Army add: "We need all the help we can get to fill the small percentage of remaining vacancies in this Corps Area. Utah and Montana have already enrolled more than 100 per cent. Nevada has just sent in more applications than are necessary to fill its quota. Oregon and Wyoming are both 91 per cent filled. But California—with 61 per cent of all the doctors in the Corps Area—has only given about 62 per cent of its quota and still lacks 478 Medical Reserve Officers. The only way to fill these vacancies is to bring the matter again to the attention of the medical profession of California."

California, at least in certain sections, is not showing up well in the publicity about progress in completing the personnel of the M. O. R. C.

Physicians interested in knowing more of the importance of this movement to our country, and particularly to themselves, should address the Surgeon, Ninth Corps Area, Presidio, San Francisco.

Some rural legislators do not believe in the descent of man. Alas, that they should furnish such conclusive evidence in favor of the latest evolutionary theory that man is but a stage between the monkey and the ass.—Boston M. and S. J.

Some very estimable physicians seem to believe that dabbling in the unpleasant field of politics or attacking the quack on his own ground is undignified and tends to dishonor scientific medicine and lower its prestige, but we believe that there is little logic in this contention, for the more intelligent and better qualified elements in society have a responsibility with respect to those who are easily misled.—Editorial Boston M. and S. J.

Demosthenes McGinnis says that the trouble with extra teeth in the prohibition law is that they are so liable to become infected.—Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger.

Man can live without food for thirty days, without water for seven days, and without air for three minutes; but the air should be filtered through the trees, flavored with sunshine and washed with the dew of heaven.—Ohio Health News.